

THE ESSENTIALS OF PERIMETRY. STATIC AND KINETIC. Howard Reed and Stephen M. Drance. Second Edition. (Pp. ix+179; figs. 203. £4.80). London: Oxford University Press, 1972.

THIS is a very satisfying book to read, and to read it, for the ophthalmologist or the neurologist, is to wish to own it. The concise presentation of the subject is greatly helped by the line drawings of the nervous tissues of the visual pathways and their related structures and of the visual field defects caused by pathological processes as they impinge on these structures at the differing levels from retina to cortex. Stress is laid on the value of observing whether disproportion exists between the fields recorded by stimuli of varying strength, e.g. 2 in 2,000 white and 20 in 2,000 red. From these conclusions regarding prognosis are deduced more readily than from a single field recording.

That the authors have been at pains to introduce into the text much new material since the original edition of 1960 is evident from the references to original articles at the end of each section, many of which are dated in the '60's and several in 1970.

In particular, a new chapter is added regarding the new approach to visual field recording by static perimetry. A concise account of this technique is included and an indication of its value can be gathered by the inclusion of illustrations of appropriate profiles shown as they are related to scotomata and relative scotomata. The figures are obtained by plotting along a chosen meridian of the visual field the minimum stimulus perceived. A rather elaborate perimeter devised by Professors Aulhorn and Harms of Tübingen is used and the recording of the fields is a time consuming process. It is, nevertheless, likely to be increasingly used in the future in ophthalmological and neurological departments.

The authors express the hope that in addition to being of use to the medical specialities of ophthalmology and neurology, their book will be of use to the technical staff who will be needed to assist in the glaucoma and perimetry clinics of the future. One can foresee that this will be a bench book in all such clinics and it will also be a considerable aid to anyone wishing to grasp the anatomy and function of the visual pathways, forming as they do a recognisable structure on which the remaining parts of the brain can be built. J.A.C.

CLINICAL GYNAECOLOGY by Wallace Barr, B.Sc., M.B., F.R.C.S., F.R.C.O.G. (Pp.x+261; Illustrated. £3.00). Edinburgh and London: Churchill Livingstone, 1972.

THIS book is a product of the Glasgow School and is essentially for those who wish to learn the practice of clinical gynaecology. As Professor Ian Donald states in the foreword, gynaecology is changing so fast that the author of a textbook requires as much sympathy as encouragement. Emphasis keeps shifting like the mudbanks of a river estuary and in recent years it is shifting away from the minutiae of surgical technique whose peak had already been reached by the great surgeons of the past. Preventive gynaecology, diagnostic gynaecology, and endocrine gynaecology have all made rapid forward strides, and it is in these fields that the reader is gently led throughout the pages of this book.

Medical students and recently qualified doctors who are bent on entering general practice need not, unless they so desire, prepare themselves to practice the science and art of obstetrics, but a thorough clinical knowledge of gynaecology, as outlined in this book, has become essential.

The author was stimulated to write this book when his daughter reached the final year of her medical studies and asked for a short and practical textbook of gynaecology. He acknowledges help from Dr. John McVicar who wrote the chapter on the problem of early pregnancy, from Dr. James Willocks who wrote on uterine displacements, from Dr. M. A. C. Cowell who wrote on radiotherapy, from Professor M. C. McNaughton who collaborated in the chapter on the sex hormones and Professor John Milne who helped with the chapter on epithelial dystrophies of the vulva.

One must congratulate him on the success of his achievement. It is not a sound proposition at this time to re-edit an old textbook and bring it up-to-date. As Professor Donald says, there are times when a fresh start must be made and Wallace Barr has made it.

J.H.M.P.